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THE

269 S P L E E N.

AN

E P I S T L E

Inscribed to his particular FRIEND

Mr. C. J.

Orandum est, ut sit mens sana in corpore sano.

By the late Mr. MATTHEW GREEN,
of the Custom-house, London,

L O N D O N;

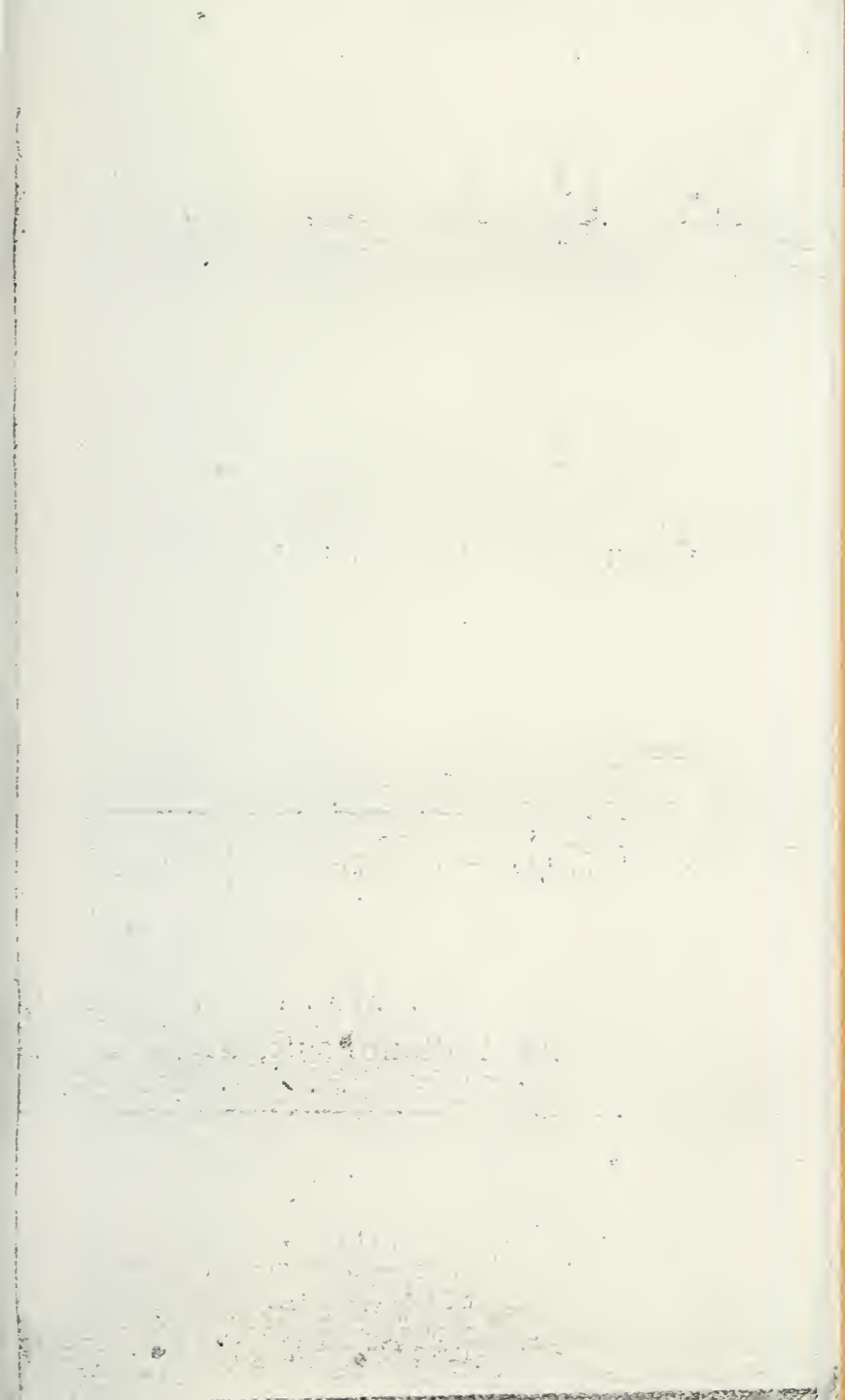
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P R E F A C E.

THE author of the following poem had the greatest part of his time taken up in business; but was accusom'd at his leisure hours to amuse himself with striking out small sketches of wit or humour for the entertainment of his friends, sometimes in verse, at other times in prose. The greatest part of these alluded to incidents known only within the circle of his acquaintance. The subject of the following poem will be more generally understood. It was at first a very short copy of verses; but at the desire of the person, to whom it is addressed, the author enlarged it to its present state. As it was writ without any design of its passing beyond the hands of his acquaintance, so the author's unexpected death soon after disappointed

pointed many of his most intimate friends in their design of prevailing on him to review and prepare it for the sight of the public. It therefore now appears under all the disadvantages, that can attend a posthumous work. But it is presum'd, every imperfection of this kind is abundantly overbalanc'd by the peculiar and un-borrow'd cast of thought and expression, which manifests itself throughout, and secures to this performance the first and principal character necessary to recommend a work of genius, that of being an original.

THE

T H E
S P L E E N.

THIS motly piece to you I send,
 Who always were a faithful friend,
 Who, if disputes should happen hence,
 Can best explain the author's sense,
 And, anxious for the publick weal,
 Do, what I sing, so often feel.

THE want of method pray excuse,
 Allowing for a vapour'd Muse;

Nor, to a narrow path confin'd,
Hedge in by rules a roving mind. 10

THE child is genuine, you can trace,
Throughout, the fire's transmitted face.
Nothing is stol'n : my Muse, tho' mean,
Draws from the spring, she finds within ;
Nor vainly buys, what Gildon sells, 15
Poetic buckets for dry wells.

SCHOOL-HELPS I want to climb on high,
Where all the ancient treasures lie,
And there unseen commit a theft
On wealth in Greek exchequers left. 20
Then where? from whom? what can I steal?
Who only with the moderns deal ;
This were attempting to put on
Rayment from naked bodies won :
They safely sing before a thief, 25
They cannot give, who want relief ;

Some

Some few excepted, names well known,
 And justly laurel'd with renown,
 Whose stamp of genius marks their ware,
 And theft detects : of theft beware ;
 From Moore so lasht, example fit,
 Shun petty larceny in wit.

FIRST know, my friend, I do not mean
 To write a treatise on the spleen ;
 Nor to prescribe, when nerves convulse,
 Nor mend th' alarum watch, your pulse :
 If I am right, your question lay,
 What course I take to drive away
 The day-mare spleen, by whose false pleas
 Men prove mere suicides in ease ;
 And how I do myself demean
 In stormy world to live serene.

WHEN by it's magick lanthorn spleen
 With frightful figures spread life's scene,

And threatening prospects urg'd my fears, 45
 A stranger to the luck of heirs ;
 Reason, some quiet to restore,
 Shew'd part was substance, shadow more ;
 With spleen's dead weight tho' heavy grown,
 In life's rough tide I sunk not down, 50
 But swam, till fortune threw a rope
 Buoyant on bladders fill'd with hope.

I ALWAYS choose the plainest food
 To mend viscosity of blood.
 Hail ! water-gruel, healing power, 55
 Of easy access to the poor ;
 Thy help love's confessors implore,
 And doctors secretly adore :
 To thee I fly, by thee dilute,
 'Thro' veins my blood doth quicker shoot ; 60
 And by swift current throws off clean
 Prolific particles of spleen.

I NEVER sick by drinking grow,
 Nor keep myself a cup too low :
 And seldom Cloe's lodgings haunt,
 Thrifty of spirits, which I want.

65

HUNTING I reckon very good
 To brace the nerves, and stir the blood ;
 But after no field-honours itch
 Atchiev'd by leaping hedge and ditch.
 While spleen lies soft relax'd in bed,
 Or o'er coal-fires inclines the head,
 Hygea's sons with hound and horn,
 And jovial cry awake the morn :
 These see her from her dusky plight,
 Smear'd by th' embraces of the night,
 With rosal wash redeem her face,
 And prove herself of Titan's race,
 And mounting in loose robes the skies,
 Shed light and fragrance, as she flies.

70

75

80

Then horse and hound fierce joy display,
 Exulting at the Hark-away,
 And in pursuit o'er tainted ground
 From lungs robust field-notes resound.
 Then, as St. George the dragon flew, 85
 Spleen pierc'd, trod down, and dying view,
 While all the spirits are on wing,
 And woods, and hills, and valleys ring.

To cure the mind's wrong biases, spleen,
 Some recommend the bowling-green; 90
 Some, hilly walks; all, exercise;
 Fling but a stone, the giant dies;
 Laugh and be well; monkeys have been
 Extreme good doctors for the spleen;
 And kitten, if the humour hit, 95
 Has harlequin'd away the fit.

SINCE mirth is good on this behalf,
 At some partic'lars let us laugh.

Witlings, brisk fools curst with half sense,
 That stimulates their impotence, 100
 Who buzz in rhyme, and, like blind flies,
 Err with their wings for want of eyes;
 Poor authors worshipping a calf;
 Deep tragedies, that make us laugh;
 A strict dissenter saying grace; 105
 A lecturer preaching for a place;
 Folks, things prophetic to dispense,
 Making the past the future tense;
 The popish dubbing of a priest;
 Fine epitaphs on knaves deceas'd; 110
 Green-apron'd Pythonissa's rage;
 Great Æsculapius on his stage;
 A miser starving to be rich;
 The prior of Newgate's dying speech;
 A jointur'd widow's ritual state; 115
 Two Jews disputing tête à tête;
 New almanacks compos'd by seers;
 Experiments on felons ears;

Disdainful prudes, who ceaseless ply
 The superb muscle of the eye ; 120
 A coquet's April-weather face ;
 A Queenb'rough mayor behind his mace ;
 And fops in military shew,
 Are sovereign for the case in view.

If spleen-fogs rise at close of day, 125
 I clear my evening with a play,
 Or to some concert take my way. }
 The company, the shine of lights, }
 The scenes of humour, musick's flights }
 Adjust, and set the soul to rights. 130

LIFE's moving pictures, well-wrought plays,
 To other's griefs attention raise :
 Here, while the tragick fictions glow,
 We borrow joy by pitying woe ;
 There, gaily comick scenes delight, 135
 And hold true mirrors to our sight.

Virtue, in charming drefs array'd,
 Calling the paffions to her aid,
 When moral fcenes juft action join,
 Takes fhape, and fhews her face divine.

140

MUSICK has charms, we all may find,
 Ingratiate deeply with the mind.
 When art does found's high power advance,
 To mufick's pipe the paffions dance ;
 Motions unwill'd it's power have fhewn,
 Tarantulated by a tune.

145

Many have held the foul to be
 Nearly allied to harmony.

Her have I known indulging grief,

And fhunning company's relief,

150

Unveil her face, and looking round,

Own by neglecting forrows wound

The confanguinity of found.

}

IN

In rainy days keep double guard,
 Or spleen will surely be too hard, 155
 Which, like those fish by sailors met,
 Flies higheft, while its wings are wet.
 In fuch dull weather, fo unfit
 To enterprize a work of wit,
 When clouds one yard of azure fky, 160
 That's fit for fimile, deny ;
 I drefs my face with ftudious looks,
 And fhorten tedious hours with books.
 But if dull fogs invade the head,
 That memory minds not what is read, 165
 I fit in window dry as ark,
 And on the drowning world remark :
 Or to fome coffee-houfe I stray
 For news, the manna of a day,
 And from the hipp'd difcourfes gather, 170
 That politicks go by the weather :
 Then feek good-humour'd tavern chums,
 And play at cards, but for fmall fums ;

Or with the merry fellows quaff,
 And laugh aloud with them that laugh; 175
 Or drink a joco-ferious cup
 With fouts, who've took their freedom up,
 And let my mind, beguil'd by talk,
 In Epicurus' garden walk,
 Who thought it heaven to be serene, 180
 Pain, hell, and purgatory, spleen.

SOMETIMES I dress, with women fit,
 And chat away the gloomy fit,
 Quit the stiff garb of serious sense,
 And wear a gay impertinence; 185
 Nor think, nor speak with any pains,
 But lay on fancy's neck the reins.
 Talk of unusual swell of waist
 In maid of honour loosely lac'd;
 And beauty borrowing Spanish red; 190
 And loving pair with sep'rate bed;

And

And jewels pawn'd for los of game,
 And then redeem'd by los of fame;
 Of Kitty (aunt left in the lurch
 By grave pretence to go to church)
 Perceiv'd in hack with lover fine,
 Like Will and Mary on the coin.
 And thus in modish manner we
 In aid of sugar sweeten tea.

195

PERMIT, ye fair, your idol form,
 Which e'en the coldest heart can warm,
 May with its beauties grace my line,
 While I bow down before it's shrine,
 And your throng'd altars with my lays
 Perfume, and get by giving praise.
 With speech so sweet, so sweet a mien,
 You excommunicate the spleen,
 Which fiend-like flies the magick ring,
 You form with sound, when pleas'd to sing.

200

205

Whate'er

Whate'er you say, howe'er you move, 210
 We look, we listen, and approve.
 Your touch, which gives to feeling bliss,
 Our nerves officious throng to kiss;
 By Celia's pat on their report
 The grave-air'd soul, inclin'd to sport, 215
 Renounces wisdom's fallen pomp,
 And loves the floral game to romp
 But who can view the pointed rays,
 That from black eyes scintillant blaze?
 Love on his throne of glory seems 220
 Encompast with Satellite beams.
 But when blue eyes more softly bright
 Diffuse benignly humid light,
 We gaze, and see the smiling loves,
 And Cytherea's gentle doves, 225
 And raptur'd fix in such a face,
 Love's mercy-seat, and throne of grace.
 Shine but on age, you melt its snow,
 Again fires long-extinguish'd glow,

And

And, charm'd by witchery of eyes, 230
 Blood long congealed liquifies,
 True miracle, and fairly done
 By heads, which are ador'd while on.

BUT O, what pity 'tis to find
 Such beauties both of form and mind, 235
 By modern breeding much debas'd
 In half the female world at least.
 Hence I with care such lotteries shun,
 Where, a prize mist, I'm quite undone,
 And han't by venturing on a wife 240
 Yet run the greatest risk in life.

MOTHERS, and guardian aunts, forbear
 Your impious pains to form the fair,
 Nor lay out so much cost and art,
 But to deflower the virgin heart 245
 Of ev'ry folly-fostering bed
 By quick'ning heat of custom bred,

Rather

Rather, than by your culture spoil'd,
 Desist, and give us nature wild,
 Delighted with a hoyden soul, 250
 Which truth and innocence controul.
 Coquets leave off affected arts,
 Gay fowlers at a flock of hearts,
 Woodcocks to shun your snares have skill,
 You shew so plain you strive to kill. 255
 In love the artless catch the game,
 And they scarce miss, who never aim.

THE world's great author did create
 The sex to fit the nuptial state,
 And meant a blessing in a wife 260
 To solace the fatigues of life ;
 And old inspired times display,
 How wives could love, and yet obey.
 Then truth, and patience of controul,
 And housewife arts adorn'd the soul ; 265
 And

And charms, the gift of nature, shone ;
 And jealousy, a thing unknown ;
 Veils were the only masks they wore,
 Novels (receipts to make a whore)
 Nor ombre, nor quadrille they knew, 270
 Nor Pam's puissance felt at Lu.
 Wise men did not, to be thought gay,
 Then compliment their power away :
 But lest, by frail desires misled,
 The girls forbidden paths should tread, 275
 Of ignorance rais'd the safe high wall,
 But we haw-haws, that shew them all ;
 Thus we at once solicit sense,
 And charge them not to break the fence.

Now, if untir'd, consider friend, 280
 What I avoid to gain my end.

I NEVER am at meeting seen,
 Meeting, that region of the spleen ;

The

The broken heart, the busy fiend,
The inward call on spleen depend.

285

LAW, licens'd breaking of the peace,
To which vacation is disease,
A gipsy diction scarce known well
By th' Magi, who law-fortunes tell,
I shun, nor let it breed within
Anxiety, and that the spleen :
Law grown a forest, where perplex
The mazes, and the brambles vex,
Where its twelve verd'ers every day
Are changing still the publick way ;
Yet if we miss our path and err,
We grievous penalties incur,
And wand'ers tire, and tear their skin,
And then get out, where they went in.

290

295

I NEVER game, and rarely bet,
Am loth to lend, or run in debt.

300

No compter-writs me agitate,
 Who moralizing pass the gate,
 And there mine eyes on spendthrifts turn,
 Who vainly o'er their bondage mourn. 305

Wisdom, before beneath their care,
 Pays her upbraiding visits there,
 And forces folly thro' the grate
 Her panegyric to repeat.
 This view, profusely when inclin'd, 310
 Enters a caveat in the mind.

Experience join'd with common sense
 To mortals is a providence.

PASSION, as frequently is seen,
 Subsiding settles into spleen; 315
 Hence, as the plague of happy life,
 I run away from party-strife.
 A prince's cause, a church's claim,
 I've known to raise a mighty flame,

And

And priest, as stoker, very free

320

To throw in peace and charity.

THAT tribe, whose practicals decree

Small-beer the deadliest heresy ;

Who, fond of pedigree, derive

From the most noted whore alive,

325

Who own wine's old prophetick aid,

And love the mitre, Bacchus made,

Forbid the faithful to depend

On half-pint drinkers for a friend ;

And in whose gay red-letter'd face

330

We read good-living more than grace :

Nor they so pure, and so precise,

Immac'late as their white of eyes ;

Who for the spirit hugg the Spleen

Phylacter'd throughout all their mien ;

335

Who their ill-tasted home-brew'd prayer

To the state's mellow forms prefer ;

Who doctrines, as infectious, fear,
 Which are not steep'd in vinegar;
 And samples of heart-chested grace 340
 Expose in shew-glass of the face;
 Did never me as yet provoke,
 Either to honour band and cloak,
 Or deck my hat with leaves of oak.

I RAIL not with mock-patriot grace 345
 At folks, because they are in place,
 Nor, hir'd to praise with stallion pen
 Serve the ear-lechery of men;
 And to avoid religious jars
 The laws are my expositors, 350
 Which in my doubting mind create
 Conformity to church and state.
 I go, pursuant to my plan,
 To Mecca with the caravan,
 And think it right in common sense 355
 Both for diversion and defence.

REFORMING schemes are none of mine,
 To mend the world's a vast design,
 Like theirs, who tug in little boat
 To pull to them the ship afloat, 360
 While, to defeat their labour'd end,
 At once both wind and stream contend :
 Success herein is seldom seen,
 And zeal, when baffl'd, turns to spleen.

HAPPY the man, who innocent 365
 Grieves not at ill, he can't prevent ;
 His skiff does with the current glide,
 Not puffing pull'd against the tide ;
 He, paddling by the scuffling crowd,
 Sees unconcern'd life's wager row'd, 370
 And when he can't prevent foul-play,
 Enjoys the folly of the fray.

By these reflections I repeal
 Each hasty promise made in zeal.

When g——l-p——s say, } 375
 We're bound our great light to display,
 And Indian darkness drive away ;
 Yet none but drunken watchmen send,
 And scoundrel link-boys for that end ;
 When they cry up this holy war, 380
 Which ev'ry christian should be for,
 Yet such as owe the law their ears
 We find employ'd as engineers :
 'This view my forward zeal for shocks,
 In vain they hold the money-box ; 385
 At such a conduct, which intends
 By vitious means such virtuous ends,
 I laugh off spleen, and keep my pence
 From spoiling Indian innocence.

YET philosophic love of ease 390
 I suffer not to prove disease ;
 But rise up in the virtuous cause
 Of a free press, and equal laws.

The press restrain'd ! nefarious thought !
 In vain our fires have nobly fought. 395
 While free from force the press remains;
 Virtue and freedom cheer our plains,
 And learning largess bestows,
 And keeps uncentur'd open house ;
 We to the nation's public mart 400
 Our works of wit, and schemes of art,
 And philosophic goods this way,
 Like water-carriage cheap convey.
 'This tree, which knowledge so affords,
 Inquisitors with flaming swords 405
 From lay-approach with zeal defend,
 Lest their own paradise should end.
 The press from her fecundous womb
 Brought forth the arts of Greece and Rome ;
 Her offspring, skill'd in logick war, 410
 Truth's banner wav'd in open air ;
 The monster Superstition fled,
 And hid in shades its Gorgon head ;

And lawless power the long-kept field,
 By reason quell'd, was forc'd to yield. 415
 This nurse of arts, and freedom's fence
 To chain, is treason against sense ;
 And, Liberty, thy thousand tongues
 None silence, who design no wrongs ;
 For those, that use the gag's restraint, 420
 First rob, before they stop complaint,

SINCE disappointment galls within,
 And subjugates the soul to spleen ;
 Most schemes as money-snares I hate,
 And bite not at projectors bait. 425
 Sufficient wrecks appear each day,
 And yet fresh fools are cast away.
 E'er well the bubbld can turn round,
 Their painted vessel runs a-ground ;
 Or in deep seas it oversets 430
 By a fierce hurricane of debts ;
 Or helm-directors in one trip,
 Freight first embezzel'd, sink the ship,

Such was of late a corporation,
 The brazen serpent of the nation, 435
 Which, when hard accidents distress'd,
 The poor must look at to be blest,
 And thence expect with paper seal'd
 By fraud and us'ry to be heal'd.

I IN no foul-consumption wait 440
 Whole years at levées of the great,
 And hungry hopes regale the while
 On the spare diet of a smile,
 There you may see the idol stand
 With mirrour in his wanton hand; 445
 Above, below, now here, now there
 He throws about the sunny glare;
 Crowds pant, and press to seize the prize,
 'The gay delusion of their eyes.

WHEN fancy tries her limning skill 450
 To draw and colour at her will,

And

And raise and round the figures well,
 And shew her talent to excel,
 I guard my heart, lest it should woo
 Unreal beauties, fancy drew, 455
 And disappointed feel despair
 At loss of things, that never were.

WHEN I lean politicians mark
 Grazing on æther in the park,
 Who e'er on wing with open throats 460
 Fly at debates, exprestes, votes,
 Just in the manner swallows use,
 Catching their airy food of news,
 Whose latrant stomachs oft molest
 The deep-laid plans, their dreams suggest; 465
 Or see some poet pensive sit,
 Fondly mistaking spleen for wit,
 Who, tho' short-winded, still will aim
 To sound the epic trump of fame,

Who

Who still on Phœbus' smiles will doat, 470
 Nor learn conviction from his coat;
 I bless my stars, I never knew
 Whimsies, which close pursu'd, undo,
 And have from old experience been
 Both parent, and the child of spleen. 475
 These subjects of Apollo's state,
 (Who from false fire derive their fate,
 With airy purchases undone
 Of lands, which none lend money on,)
 Born dull, had follow'd thriving ways, 480
 Nor lost one hour to gather bays.
 Their fancies first delirious grew,
 And scenes ideal took for true.
 Fine to the sight Parnassus lies,
 And with false prospects cheats their eyes; 485
 The fabl'd goods, the poets sing,
 A season of perpetual spring,
 Brooks, flow'ry fields, and groves of trees
 Affording sweets, and similes,

Gay dreams inspir'd in myrtle bow'rs, 490
 And wreaths of undecaying flow'rs,
 Apollo's harp with airs divine,
 The sacred musick of the nine,
 Views of the temple rais'd to fame,
 And for a vacant nitch proud aim 495
 Ravish their souls, and plainly shew,
 What fancy's sketching pow'r can do;
 They will attempt the mountain steep,
 Where on the top, like dreams in sleep,
 The muses revelations shew, 500
 That find men crackt, or make them so.

You friend, like me, the trade of rhyme
 Avoid, elab'rate waste of time,
 Nor are content to be undone,
 And pass for Phœbus' crazy son. 505
 Poems, the hop-grounds of the brain,
 Afford the most uncertain gain;
 And

And lott'ries never tempt the wife,
 With blanks so many to a prize.
 I only transient visits pay, 51
 Meeting the Muses in my way,
 Scarce known to the fastidious dames,
 Nor skill'd to call them by their names;
 Nor can their passports in these days
 Your profit warrant, or your praise: 51
 On poems by their dictates writ
 Criticks, as sworn appraisers sit,
 And, mere upholsterers, in a trice
 On gems and paintings set a price;
 These Tayl'ring artists for our lays 52
 Invent cramp'd rules, and with strait stays
 Striving free nature's shape to hit,
 Emaciate sense, before they fit.

A common place, and many friends
 Can serve the plagiarist's ends,

52
Who

Whose easy vamping-talent lies,
 First wit to pilfer, then disguise.
 Thus some devoid of art and skill
 To search the mine on Pindus' hill,
 Proud to aspire and workmen grow, 530
 By genius doom'd to stay below,
 As their own digging, shew the town
 Wit's treasure brought by others down.
 Some wanting, if they find a mine,
 An artist's judgment to refine, 535
 On fame precipitately fixt,
 The ore with baser metals mixt
 Melt down, impatient of delay,
 And call the vicious mass a play.
 All these engage to serve their ends 540
 A band select of trusty friends,
 Who, lesson'd right, extol the thing,
 As Psaphon taught his birds to sing.
 Then to the ladies they submit,
 Returning officers on wit; 545

A crouded house their prefence draws,
 And on the beaus impofes laws ;
 And judgment in its favour ends,
 When all the pannel are its friends :
 Their natures merciful and mild 550
 Have from mere pity fav'd the child ;
 In bulrush alk the bantling found,
 Helpless, and ready to be drown'd,
 They have preserv'd by kind fupport,
 And brought the baby-mufe to court. 555

BUT there's a youth, that you can name,
 Who needs no leading-strings to fame,
 Whose quick maturity of brain
 The birth of Pallas may explain ;
 Dreaming of whose depending fate, 560
 I heard Melpomene debate,
 This, this is he, that was foretold,
 Should emulate our Greeks of old,

Inspir'd

Inspir'd by me with sacred art,
 He sings, and rules the varied heart : 565
 If Jove's dread anger he rehearse,
 We hear the thunder in his verse ;
 If he describe love turn'd to rage,
 The furies riot on his page ;
 If he fair liberty and law 570
 By ruffian power expiring draw,
 The keener passions then engage
 Aright, and sanctify their rage ;
 If he attempt disastrous love,
 We hear those plaints, that wound the grove ; 575
 Within the kinder passions glow,
 And tears distill'd from pity flow.

FROM the bright vision I descend,
 And my deserted theme attend.

ME never did ambition seize, 580
 Strange fever most inflam'd by ease,

The

'The active lunacy of pride,
 'That courts jilt fortune for a bride.
 'This par'dise-tree, so fair and high,
 I view with no aspiring eye : 585
 Like aspine shake the restless leaves,
 And Sodom-fruit our pains deceives ;
 Whence frequent falls give no surprize,
 But fits of spleen call'd growing wise.
 Greatness in glitt'ring forms display'd, 590
 Affects weak eyes much us'd to shade,
 And by its falsely envy'd scene
 Gives self-debasing fits of spleen.
 We should be pleas'd that things are so,
 Who do for nothing see the show, 595
 And, middle-siz'd, can pass between
 Life's hubbub safe, because unseen,
 And 'midst the glare of greatness trace
 A watry sun-shine in the face,
 And pleasures fled to, to redress 600
 'The sad fatigue of idleness.

CONTENTMENT, parent of delight,
 So much a stranger to our sight,
 Say, goddess, in what happy place
 Mortals behold thy blooming face ; 605
 Thy gracious auspices impart,
 And for thy temple chuse my heart.
 They, whom thou deignest to inspire,
 Thy science learn, to bound desire ;
 By happy alchymy of mind 610
 They turn to pleasure all they find ;
 They both disdain in outward mien
 The grave and solemn garb of spleen,
 And meretricious arts of dress
 To feign a joy, and hide distress ; 615
 Unmov'd when the rude tempest blows,
 Without an opiate they repose ;
 And cover'd by your shield defy
 The whizzing shafts, that round them fly ;
 Nor, meddling with the Gods' affairs, 620
 Concern themselves with distant cares ;
 But

But place their bliss in mental rest,
And feast upon the good possess.

:

FORC'D by soft violence of pray'r
The blythsome goddess sooths my care ; 62
I feel the deity inspire,
And thus she models my desire.
Two hundred pounds half-yearly paid,
Annuity securely made ;
A farm some twenty miles from town, 63
Small, tight, salubrious, and my own ;
Two maids; that never saw the town ;
A serving-man not quite a clown ;
A boy to help to tread the mow,
And drive, while t'other holds the plough ; 63
A chief of temper form'd to please,
Fit to converse, and keep the keys,
And better to preserve the peace,
Commission'd by the name of niece ;

With understandings of a size 640

To think their master very wise.

May heaven (it's all I wish for) send

One genial room to treat a friend,

Where decent cup-board, little plate

Displays benevolence, not state. 645

And may my humble dwelling stand

Upon some chosen spot of land ;

A pond before full to the brim,

Where cows may cool, and geese may swim ;

Behind a green, like velvet neat, 650

Soft to the eye, and to the feet,

Where od'rous plants in evening fair

Breathe all around ambrosial air,

From Eurus, foe to kitchen-ground,

Fenc'd by a slope with bushes crown'd, 655

Fit dwelling for the feather'd throng,

Who pay their quit-rents with a song ;

With op'ning views of hills and dales,

Which sense and fancy too regales,

Where

Where the half-cirque, which vision bounds, 660

Like amphitheatre furrounds ;

And woods impervious to the breeze,

Thick phalanx of embodied trees,

From hills thro' plains in dusk array

Extended far repel the day. 665

Here stillness, height, and solemn shade

Invite, and contemplation aid :

Here nymphs from hollow oaks relate

The dark decrees and will of fate,

And dreams beneath the spreading beach 670

Inspire, and docile fancy teach ;

While soft as breezy breath of wind,

Impulses rustle thro' the mind :

Here Dryads, scorning Phœbus ray,

While Pan melodious pipes away, 675

In measur'd motions frisk about,

'Till old Silenus puts them out :

There see the clover, pea, and bean,

Vie in variety of green ;

Fresh pastures speckl'd o'er with sheep ; 680
 Brown fields their fallow sabbaths keep ;
 Plump Ceres golden tresses wear,
 And poppy-topknots deck her hair ;
 And silver stream thro' meadows stray,
 And Naiads on the margin play ; 685
 And lesser nymphs on side of hills,
 From play-thing urns pour down the rills.

Thus shelter'd free from care and strife,
 May I enjoy a calm thro' life ;
 See faction, safe in low degree, 690
 As men at land see storms at sea ;
 And laugh at miserable elves
 Not kind, so much as to themselves,
 Curst with such souls of base alloy,
 As can possess, but not enjoy, 695
 Debarr'd the pleasure to impart
 By av'rice, sphincter of the heart,

Who.

Who wealth, hard earn'd by guilty cares,
Bequeath untouch'd to thankless heirs.

May I, with look ungloom'd by guile, 700

And wearing virtue's livery-smile ;

Prone the distressed to relieve,

And little trespasses forgive ;

With income not in fortune's pow'r,

And skill to make a busy hour ; 705

With trips to town, life to amuse,

To purchase books, and hear the news,

To see old friends, brush off the clown,

And quicken taste at coming down ;

Unhurt by sickness' blasting rage, 710

And slowly mellowing in age,

When fate extends its gath'ring gripe,

Fall off like fruit grown fully ripe,

Quit a worn being without pain,

Perhaps to blossom soon again. 715

BUT now more serious see me grow,
And what I think, my Memmius, know.

TH' enthusiast's hopes, and raptures wild,
Have never yet my reason foil'd.
His springy soul dilates like air, 720
When free from weight of ambient care ;
And, hush'd in meditations deep,
Slides into dreams, as when asleep ;
Then, fond of new discov'ries grown,
Proves a Columbus of her own, 725
Disdains the narrow bounds of place,
And thro' the wilds of endless space,
Born up on metaphysic wings,
Chafes light forms, and shadowy things ;
And in the vague excursion caught, 730
Brings home some rare exotic thought :
The melancholy man such dreams,
As brightest evidence esteems ;

Fain

Fain would he see some distant scene
 Suggested by his restless spleen,
 And fancy's telescope applies
 With tinctur'd glass to cheat his eyes.
 Such thoughts, as love the gloom of night,
 I close examine by the light.
 For who, tho' brib'd by gain to lye,
 Dare sun-beam written truths deny,
 And execute plain common sense
 On faith's mere hearsay evidence?

735

740

THAT superstition mayn't create,
 And club its ills with those of fate,
 I many a notion take to task,
 Made dreadful by its visor-mask :
 Thus scruple, spasm of the mind,
 Is cur'd, and certainty I find ;
 Since optic reason shews me plain
 I dreaded spectres of the brain ;

745

750

And

And legendary fears are gone,
 'Tho' in tenacious childhood frown.
 Thus in opinions I commence
 Freeholder in the proper sense, 755
 And neither suit nor service do,
 Nor homage to pretenders shew,
 Who boast themselves by spurious roll
 Lords of the manner of the foul;
 Preferring sense, from chin that's bare, 760
 To nonsense thron'd in whisker'd hair.

To thee, creator uncreate,
 O Entium Ens divinely great!——
 Hold, Muse, nor melting pinions try;
 Nor near the blazing glory fly; 765
 Nor straining break thy feeble bow,
 Unfeather'd arrows far to throw;
 Thro' fields unknown nor madly stray,
 Where no ideas mark the way;

With

With tender eyes, and colours faint, 770

And trembling hands forbear to paint.

Who features veil'd by light can hit?

Where can, what has no outline, fit?

My soul, the vain attempt forgo,

Thyself, the fitter subject, know. 775

He wisely shuns the bold extreme,

Who soon lays by th' unequal theme,

Nor runs, with wisdom's Sirens caught,

On quick-sand swallowing shipwreckt thought;

But, conscious of his distance, gives 780

Mute praise, and humble negatives.

In one, no object of our sight,

Immutable and infinite,

Who can't be cruel, or unjust,

Calm and resign'd, I fix my trust; 785

To him my past and present state

I owe, and must my future fate.

A stranger into life I'm come,

Dying may be our going home,

Transported

Transported here by angry fate, 790

The convicts of a prior state :

Hence I no anxious thoughts bestow

On matters, I can never know.

Thro' life's foul ways, like vagrant, pass'd,

He'll grant a settlement at last ; 795

And with sweet ease the wearied crown,

By leave to lay his being down.

If doom'd to dance th' eternal round

Of life, no sooner lost than found ;

And dissolution soon to come, 800

Like sponge, wipes out life's present sum,

But can't our state of pow'r bereave

An endless series to receive :

Then if hard dealt with here by fate,

We ballance in another state, 805

And consciousness must go along,

And sign th' acquittance for the wrong ;

He for his creatures must decree

More happiness than misery,

Or

Or be supposed to create, 810
 Curious to try, what 'tis to hate,
 And do an act, which rage infers,
 'Cause lameness halts, or blindness errs.

Thus, thus I steer my bark, and sail
 On even keel with gentle gale. 815
 At helm I make my reason sit,
 My crew of passions all submit.
 If dark and blustering prove some nights
 Philosophy puts forth her lights ;
 Experience holds the cautious glass, 820
 To shun the breakers, as I pass ;
 And frequent throws the wary lead,
 To see what dangers may be hid.
 And once in seven years I'm seen
 At Bath, or Tunbridge to careen. 825
 Tho' pleas'd to see the dolphins play,
 I mind my compass and my way ;

With

With store sufficient for relief,
 And wisely still prepar'd to reef;
 Nor wanting the disperfive bowl 830
 Of cloudy weather in the foul,
 I make (may heaven propitious send
 Such wind and weather to the end)
 Neither becalm'd, nor over-blown,
 Life's voyage to the world unknown. 835

F I N I S.

